Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

The flowers of the earth do no grudge at one another, though one be more beautiful and more full of virtue than another; but they stand kindly one by another, and enjoy one another's virtue.

— Jacob Boehme

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OUR PURPOSE

To promote the practice of prayer among ALL religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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WHAT IS PRAYER?

We often think of faith as made of many facets like a cut diamond.

But prayer is more like a tapestry woven of many strands, strands of all sizes, lengths, colors, making a variety of patterns. The strands range in size from gossamer threads to the strong fibre of hemp. There are short flash prayers and long ponderous ones; prayers so weak in faith they are lost, but others so strong the answer is immediately available.

Sometimes the threads are of gold and silver; sometimes of deepest blue or black; and others carry every shade of the spectrum. The patterns become pictures of life experiences, some as lovely as a lacy fern, others as dismal as a dark cavern of despair.

For prayer is the life of the soul in its search for God, in its struggle with self and sin, in its days of overcoming or hours of defeat. The prayer life is the story of man's contact with God. Its experiences are darkened with earth and brightened with God's light, born in need or struggle, and completed in joy and victory.

We shall never see or know the pattern or design, but we shall rejoice in the effort and the sense of real achievement.

Prayer is the weaving done by the soul on the loom of life and the warp of God's patience.

— Mildred Long

EDITORIAL

A TIME FOR GREATNESS

It is an illusion on our part to imagine that God is specially concerned with religion. Religion after all is a human invention. Christ founded no religion, Buddha did not. They simply told us that this life was fleeting, that the life of the senses was death, that our nature was spiritual and potentially divine, that Truth was to be realized and could be realized, that all men and all life were One, that each of us was called upon to experience this; and they laid down certain unchanging principles to help us attain this experience. "Religion" came later. The real religion, the only religion, is the realization of Truth, or God, or the divine Self in all beings—and then to act upon this realization in the world of men. We need a few hundred people who can do this, a few hundred brave men and women who are bold enough to live the Truth at all costs, to practice the highest truths in their lives under all circumstances. If we can find such people, or help to produce them, we could turn this earth into heaven overnight.

Where can we find them? How can we produce them?

Without them, we lack direction, we lack guidance, inspiration, example, power and enlightenment; without them the world will continue to rush headlong to its doom, as it always tends to do. In periods when such people have flourished, the world has known peace, and religion—the *spiritual* religion, the religion of inner realization—has seemed the most exciting of callings. This is what we so desperately need now. All recognize the need, though different remedies are offered. Some seek the answer in politics, social arrangements, education, and the like. These things have been tried in one form or another for centuries but in times of stress or fear we see how insubstantial they are. They give a man nothing to cling to, nothing on which to take his stand. The truths they contain are transient truths, expendable truths. Truth *itself* is the only foundation we can stand on, and men of Truth—and women of Truth, for in this age spiritual, god-

ly women can serve as beacons to humanity—are the only ones who can lead us.

They must be free, emancipated, liberated men, above the smoke of controversy and the restrictions of dogma and doctrine. They will not be men who believe only their path is the right path, only their ideal is the ideal for everyone, only their religion, or their God, or their faith is the one that others should embrace. Their spirituality will make them brothers to all men. Often they will belong to no special church or group, for the narrow viewpoints of many churches will repel them—they will be broad, universal men, wide-ranging and fearless; they will see that churches come and go, religions come and go, but the Truth changes not and endures and absorbs, in time, all the lesser truths to which other men, lower on the scale of evolution, cling with such tenacity. Some members of the clergy, beyond theology and creed, will be found among them, but mostly they will be laymen, for *laymen bear the torch of high religion in this generation and henceforth,* and it is they who will teach other laymen the truth of things and awaken in them the responsibility that every individual must bear.

Let us look for these men, let us help produce them. One of the prime functions of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER is to help awaken a few of them, even a few, to their high destiny. If all our efforts resulted in only this, they would have been supremely worthwhile. If we could contribute to the making of a single spiritual leader, one saint, one prophet for our time, our labors would be wonderfully vindicated. And let other movements do the same. No movement and no group has a monopoly on Truth. Each does what it can, according to its lights. It is really one great spiritual work we are all engaged in and none can claim to do it better than others. *It is a privilege to do any of it,* for God is the power and mind behind it all. He is really the Doer, the Worker. We are his instruments, his servants, called out into this great arena of the world to work out our destinies and become perfect.

It is a joy to serve him, a privilege to serve. This is his world, he will save it or destroy it as it suits

Him. What can *we* do? Can we save the world? It is egoism to think this. *Let us change ourselves first and then the world will change.* This is the only way. People who are out to change the world are the ones who will not face the task of first transforming themselves. Christ could have changed the world in his own lifetime—he had the power, certainly, had he wished to do so. He could have had thousands of disciples, but had only eleven. We should follow his example. Let us find a few great souls, men and women of spiritual greatness, and follow them, or be one with them perhaps—and practice the Truth in all our activities, day and night, year after year. This is what we need, this is what the world needs.

And when we work, let us work with a burning detachment, remembering it is the Lord's world, not ours. Ours is the *chance* to work, to serve—to serve Him. Let us not expect any praise or reward. Let us work with no motive except to work perfectly and *make the end and means one and the same.* Let us forget about rewards, in this world or the next, and work for work's sake alone, for the joy of working, of serving, of doing our part to help humanity, whether we succeed or not.

It will help us tremendously if we remember that it is God who is in every man and so it is really Him that we are serving, literally Him, the Lord of all. Let us fill our mind with these thoughts, day and night, until they become part of our lives, rooted in our very beings. They will fill us with an irresistible strength and freedom and will make the works we do as effective as the best prayers, the deepest meditations, in the process of spiritualization. Work rightly performed—selflessly, in nonattachment, heedless of results—will fill us with the power of the Infinite and make us feel as giants...the giants we all really are, if we would but awaken to the fact. It will burn into us the conviction that, yes, it is true after all, we are divine and deathless and the might of the universe is in us and all the love and all the truth of all universes everywhere is in us. And that Truth is we ourselves, the very fount and substance of our souls.

Now... is the Hour

TIME has taken on a new meaning for me these past few years, as one by one my dearest friends and loved ones have slipped past the gates of today into a new tomorrow. For many years time was a measure of meeting my desires of the moment, my emotions of everyday living. Now time is a horizon upon the vast tomorrow of eternity, and yet a vivid collected memory of all my yesterdays. Now within this moment lies the essence of all tomorrow's visions. Here is designed the dreams for future years. The realities of this moment will become the poignant memories of a distant day; they must be perfected with loving care.

In the prodigality of youth my golden moments were poured across the sands of time in spendthrift fashion. But wisdom and experience have been exacting teachers, and now no moment is hoarded or spent idly but is treasured. Each God-given moment is mine to make of it a gift for the future in joyous remembering or painful forgetfulness along the path of memory.

Let me press between the pages of the book of life a rose of indescribable loveliness...A mountain vista clad in the still green peace of contemplating pines, or the fragile blossom of foam-drift waves thrown out upon a lonely shore. These are God-given beauties that can bless and heal the soul. Or better still, I will carry into tomorrow the warmth of the smile of a child who shared an hour of loving and being loved. Or the heart-rending cry of a lonely soul stricken with grief, yet somehow the knowledge that for a moment my love had lifted it above the agony and pain of separation.

These are the "Nows," the moments of importance on the scroll of infinity. Our life can be only a whisper at the dawn of God's infinite day, yet striving with courage and truth and God's creative love we can become a clarion call throughout Life's day, giving a purpose for humanity for this day and all days to come. Let Now, this hour, become the time for our lives to take on new fire, new vision and new strength, to bring the infinitude of God's time into the scale of man's existence, making all tomorrows a blessing and inspiration born from the hour of today.

— *Zelma Dennis*

SO YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN PRAYER

Rev. H. Richard Rasmusson

ONE DAY a person said to me, "I don't believe in prayer." I immediately concluded that here was a very intelligent and also a very foolish person.

This person was intelligent in the sense that he no longer expected a prayer to change the vast cosmic processes to his whim and desire. He no longer believed that prayer could be a substitute for hard work. He no longer looked upon prayer as a "device for using the Infinite Arm to secure things which human arms are too short to reach." Prayer had ceased being a magical way of getting selfish wants fulfilled.

But he was foolish in that he didn't realize that he was everyday engaging in practices which, while he called them by other names, were nevertheless prayer. Prayer is much more than petition. At times it is that and when qualified by "thy will be done" can be mature prayer. But everyday, in various other ways, we do pray—even my friend who said he didn't.

Consider first, that prayer is *gratitude*. Can you sit down to a well supplied table, being hungry, without musing gratefully on the richness of the earth, the warmth of the sun, the goodness of the rain and the literally thousands of processes and persons that have had a share in making the meal you are about to eat and enjoy possible? If you can your soul is dead. How can anyone sit down to his food, or read a good book, or listen to great music and take it all as if it were his due—feel no indebtedness to the Larger Life that enfolds him and serves him? To be aware of the social processes and interconnections of life ministering to our growth and well-being and to be grateful, is prayer. Take things with gratitude; not for granted. This is prayer.

Consider in the second place that prayer is *contemplation*. When we meditate upon life's meaning and mystery, thinking about the sacrifices made (and being made) in our behalf and the high uses some people have made of their opportunities in life and ourselves stirred to do likewise, we are praying. *Prayer is meditation upon this spiritual meaning of life*. It is contemplation on

the mystery and awesome aspects of our strange life here.

When Jesus, as the New Testament tells us, arose a great while before day, and went out into a desert place and there prayed, what shall we believe he prayed about? Surely not small and petty petitions that revolved about his ego. Instead his whole life compels us to believe that he engaged in spiritual contemplation on the meaning and destiny of life and the high uses to which it should be put.

It was the habit of George Washington Carver, the great Negro scientist, to arise every morning before dawn and go out into the woods alone. There he studied nature and gathered the specimens of his Father's handiwork, in the spirit of wonder. "When other folks are still asleep," he wrote, "I hear God best and learn His plan." And always this is the essence of spiritual contemplation: to learn God's plan. It is meaning, with all the strength of our desires, "not my will, but Thine be done." Such contemplation is prayer.

Consider in the third place that prayer is *dominant desire.* "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed."

Now because everyone has desires, it means that everyone of us, willy-nilly, does pray. And it follows that if our desires are low and selfish, the effects of our desires or prayers will be evil and harmful. But if our desires are high and of good report, the consequences of them will be healthy and good. Here is why the Psalmist prayed: "Lord, all my desires are before Thee." Look carefully to your desires, for out of them are the issues of life. Check them in the presence of God and see whether He approves. Not all our desires are good.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, when he preached his first sermon on prayer, divided it into three parts: the first was, everybody prays; the second, everybody gets what he prays for; the third, look out what you pray for. From this outline it is very obvious that he was thinking of prayer as dominant desire.

Someone remarked once that it was strange that Jesus said nothing in the Beatitudes about prayer. But he did. When he said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness," he was thinking of prayer as dominant desire. And when we want, deeply desire—hunger and thirst

after righteousness, we do get righteousness in our life. And desiring what is low and evil, we get that too. The dangerous thing about prayer at this point is not that prayers are unanswered but that they are.

Consider finally that prayer is *friendship with God.* So Dr. George Buttrick in his book on prayer defines it: "friendship with God." In prayer we commune with God our Creator and our Father. Prayer deepens our acquaintance with Him and we learn to know and love Him better. The great St. Augustine, writing about prayer and communion with God, said that the reward of our praying is God Himself. In such prayer, God *gives Himself*— "not knowledge for which we must toil, not strength for which we must exercise, not truth for which we must search, but Himself, who is the inspiration for all these lesser things."

Prayer will not remove the obstacles that were before us when we began to pray, but through our deepened friendship with God, they are no longer insurmountable and the lessons that seemed so difficult, while still waiting to be tackled, will now be done with new purpose and determination in a quieter spirit. Prayer as friendship and fellowship with God gives us strength to do what must be done with poise, serenity and deepened courage.

Jesus once said: "Henceforth I call you not servants but friends."

Abraham, we are told, was called "the friend of God." Let us be friends with God. *Prayer is* friendship with God.

TRAVAIL

As Jacob, only yesterday,
Wrestled on the midnight plain
In darkness, striving silently
To feel the dawn again.

So have I fought this long night through,
And made the Angel to me, One;
And rising in the sweet new light
Have, limping, faced the sun.

— Eleanor Stark

SELF-SURRENDER

"FOR SOME TIME I have been giving much thought and prayer to this thing we call 'surrender'. I know it contains the answer to everything and its depth we haven't begun to sound...

"We know how tremendously difficult surrender is, and how many times we think we have achieved it only to realize later that we actually never came close to it even. For the kind of surrender demanded of us is the surrender of the TOTAL self—the deep will as well as the mind and heart. And it has very clever and subtle ways of deceiving us. As for discerning the will of God in a particular situation, this we know too is a step far in advance of most of us. But I believe that guidance can come so quietly and gradually that we are almost unaware that it is this.

"I once read some lines to the effect that the will of God can be known only to the wholly selfless man, but that with every step this self is reduced that Will can be a dawning realization. And this second thought, from the same source: When the desire to impose one's own FORMATIVE will upon the course of events is truly renounced (and I would add, dead) God's will IS known. We know how far we are from that blessed state, and how many earnest students still cannot separate God's will from something they feel keenly is good. But though we cannot reach that state where our will is utterly withdrawn, still it is something very wonderful just to be aware of it, to know it exists, and to WANT to reach it....

"We all know how far we are from truly walking that Path, but we ARE pressing on, we ARE still striving, and surrender is the key. I am trying to let no day pass without making as full a surrender of this total self called I as possible, and yet I fail again and again in making this real in the daily tests amongst my fellowmen. I am sure that to wholly surrender one's whole inner world of feeling and thought, as well as the outer actions, must be a work of not one lifetime, but many. How could it be otherwise? All true growth is slow. But there is always Grace, which heartens us, doesn't it?..."

— Helen Bridgman *(From a letter to FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER)*

SCIENCE OF SOUL

Mark Halpern

THROUGHOUT THE AGES we human beings have been theorizing and philosophizing on the meaning of life. But only when we come to realize that life is an opportunity for service are we on our way to the discovery of its meaning.

In these days, surely, there are no just grounds for any of us to complain that life does not present us with an opportunity to serve. For it is a great challenge to the soul of man to be in physical embodiment at this time in this most eventful and paradoxical of all centuries. This century has witnessed unspeakable barbaric atrocities perpetrated by man against his fellow man and the most destructive global warfare in the planet's history, with unparalleled toll of human life bringing deep anguish and suffering to many millions; and yet in this same century there is beginning to dawn the supreme spiritual event thus far in the evolution of mankind: *the emergence of the Kingdom of the Soul*.

How glibly we use the phrase, Kingdom of the Soul, a phrase that connotes such profound spiritual significance for all the kingdoms of nature on this planet, that no mere mortal language could be adequate to expound the momentous import behind it.

We know that words are merely the finite tools of the mind, while the mind itself is but the instrument of the soul. We avail ourselves of words whenever we try to communicate our thoughts in our personality relations with one another. But when we use words in speaking of the Kingdom of the Soul, we are bound to feel limited. For the language of the soul is not that of words, but rather of direct and immediate insight or intuition into the heart and soul of our brothers of the one human family.

Whenever we seek to grasp the meaning of another's words merely from the standpoint of our own biased and arbitrary preconceptions, prejudices and opinions, we fail to perceive the other person's true motive and meaning intended to be conveyed by his or her words. But once we rise above our little separative self of the egotis-

tic personality and listen self-forgetfully to the other in the spirit of Oneness, we find that we understand one another perfectly; that we are speaking soul to soul, through that crystal-clear medium of understanding which is an essential quality of the soul.

Only in that spirit of perfect understanding, and in that serene atmosphere of the constant realization of our Oneness, can we best serve and best agree, and best work efficiently with our fellow servers in bringing the Kingdom of the Soul into actuality in our times.

Of course, all individuals who are serving in the Plan toward helping to usher in the Kingdom of the Soul sincerely want to do their part for humanity. Whether consciously or unconsciously, we are deeply aware that this is the hour in our eternal life when we must not be found wanting; that this is the testing time for all mankind, but particularly so for those of us who have offered ourselves to be used in bringing in the long promised age of Peace and Goodwill upon this troubled earth...

However, before the Kingdom of the Soul can emerge in any great degree, we must face and meet the mighty challenge that now confronts the human race on its road to progress, as the result of our having succeeded in splitting the physical atom. The nature of that challenge might be worded thus: "Man, now that you have discovered how to unleash the most potent physical force in the universe, can you find a way to fuse the split physical atom with the spiritual atom eternally and intrinsically present in every human being?"

In order to meet this momentous challenge to the attainment of our highest destiny, and thus pave the way for the eventual full emergence of the Kingdom of the Soul, a new science—new, that is, to mankind as a whole—is beginning to find its way into the human race. It is the Science of Soul. And those who have knowledge of this dynamic soul-healing Science, are the knights of the true Round Table, their glorious Leader being the Great Server and Great Healer in the Kingdom of the Soul. And they go forth under His flaming banner of Selfless Service, as Scientists of the Soul, in most cases unknown and unsung, for the succour and healing of the

Soul of humanity.

It is for this high calling that we are all in training. And there is a way we can best measure up to the opportunity of being trained for this Immortal Profession, so as to be fully equipped in helping toward the emergence of the Kingdom of the Soul. It is by expressing to the best of our ability the selfless impersonal qualities of the soul as brought to the fore through the Divine Science and Art of Inner Communion with our True Being that is ever in contact with Reality, and thus evoking and releasing the Light of the Soul in our daily lives.

To do this, we must live at our Highest and in the true Spirit of Oneness. There are three basic general requirements for functioning from this awareness:

FIRST. We must have transcended all our prejudices; or, at least, if there be any that we have not as yet fully transcended, we shall have recognized them for what they are and be working sincerely to rise above them.

SECOND. We must have recognized our responsibility to the One Human Family and have offered ourselves in service toward its highest welfare.

THIRD. We must seek always to live according to Eternal Spiritual Values, rather than according to evanescent materialistic values.

By always discriminating between the Eternal and the temporal, between the Real and the unreal, between the Everlasting Essence of Life and the passing superficiality of all its perishable outer forms, we develop the unshakable conviction that the life-energy beneath and in back of all natural phenomena and manifestations is One. In that realization of the all-pervading and all-embracing essential Oneness of all life, and in our identification with it, we find it easy to surrender our childish attachment to the erroneous notion of separativeness associated with the little I-me-mine pettiness of the personality.

Once we have seen clearly how petty indeed were all our former personality expressions of thought, word and act, we pierce the veil of egoistic self-centeredness and behold ourselves as the soul, one with all souls in the One Universal Soul. We experience as a fact that the soul is truly

functioning only when it is giving its all in selfless service for the good of all; in contrast to the personality, which is motivated by constant cravings and desires for one's self and one's own.

In an earlier stage in the evolving consciousness of the human race, man was encouraged to rise to a certain degree of moral responsibility through fear of punishment from the tribal gods by means of disease, plagues, and what were thought to be the malevolent visitations of the angry gods, in the form of floods, earthquakes and other cataclysms.

In the next stage mankind was taught that by doing good to his fellow man and by trying to live harmoniously one with another, he would be rewarded in some future existence.

Now, however, the teaching that has been received by those highly consecrated Servers of humanity who are truly the Scientists of the Soul, and which is by *them inculcated in the consciousness of humanity as a whole*, is the one that expounds the high privilege of serving without even *thought* of reward, whether present or future: the divine opportunity to serve selflessly being in itself the only reward worthy the consideration of a true Server cooperating with the Divine Plan.

For the successful emergence of the Kingdom of the Soul, mankind must be on guard against the glamour of cold intellectual self-sufficiency that is so much a characteristic of this century with its many scientific achievements. For the soul of man can not live by the bread of cold facts and logic and test tubes alone; it needs the vital sustenance of the distilled Essence of Beauty created through the arts. True, the incoming Science of Soul may be incapable of producing desolate armies of ingenious lifeless robots and automatons. But it *is* capable of creating a Soul Culture and Civilization founded on a true understanding between races, between nations, and between individuals. For it is a Science of the Intuition and Direct Cognition of the Oneness of Life, which breaks down all separative barriers of discord and misunderstanding. It will spread the Light of the Oneness of all beings through bringing about in the individual's own direct ex-

perience the Realization of the *Fact* of Oneness.

And thus it is that we are in training. The urgent need of the hour is for Scientists of the Soul who will help with the emergence of the Kingdom of the Soul. To become a Scientist of the Soul does not require great intellectual brilliance, nor academic honors. But it does demand the deepest self-surrender in undeviating dedication and consecration to the highest welfare of all.

When we realize that we are not mere forsaken, isolated and separated beings adrift on some nameless dark sea of dead space, but that we are all focal points, undying flaming focal points of One Energy and Light, one with the one Radiant Energy-Light of our Creator, from Whom all things proceed and to Whom all things return, in Whom we live and move and have our being, we shall no longer have any great problems in right human relations. And we shall have no fears for ourselves or for others. For we shall know that we are all deathless, immortal, invulnerable, One with the Eternal Infinite Life of the Absolute, which is always present in each of us as a spark of its own Undying Energy Substance.

Realizing this, what else can we do but offer ourselves to be used to the fullest, saying:

"We are ready, O Lord of Light and Love. Make us more ready...so that we may ever faithfully fulfill the part that has been given us in the Divine Plan for the good of all in the ONE... and for the Power and the Glory of the ONE in all.... So may it be."

The Contagion of Truth

When one's heart leaps at hearing or reading the word of truth, it is because it is the word of one's OWN spirit. It was said, "The Spirit of truth shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance." The eternal spirit within us knows all things. We need only to become still, to relax the questioning, anxious mind, and all truth will be revealed to us. How could it be brought to our remembrance, had we not always known it?

— Vida Reed Stone

THE ADVENTURE OF LIFE

Dr. W. J. Thompson

THE LIFE OF A HUMAN BEING has been pictured in many ways, but there is no description more fitting than *The Great Adventure*. We arrive here without our consent, and leave the same way, while in between the years present a strange mixture of joy and sorrow, of light and darkness; and these contradictory experiences are so blended that we find ourselves unable to untangle them.

For so many people life is just a bewildering collection of unrelated happenings, and the more they try to understand it the more complicated it becomes. So they give up in despair. Such tremendous folly is the result of wrong thinking *due to refusal to accept the spiritual key that unlocks the dungeon of depression and leads to true understanding of life.*

Many others are troubled by the monotony of life. They get out of bed every morning at the same hour, eat the same sort of breakfast, walk along the same streets or catch the same bus that will take them to the same daily job, seeing the same people returning home at the same hour each evening, and after eating the same sort of dinner they read the same paper, listen to the same radio or television program, climb into the same bed, and start the same tiresome routine all over again!

No wonder such persons become terribly bored. They tell themselves that if only they could go somewhere else and do something different they would be happy. But that is not the answer. Wherever we go, we take ourselves along! It is not a new location, or a new job, *but a new outlook upon life, a new spirit,* that is needed.

There is a way that will help you make the best of life and change it into a glorious Daily Adventure! Admit your inability to solve life's problems with your own wisdom. Confess your need of Divine Help and turn to Him who says, "Behold, I make all things new," and as you humbly place your life in the hands of God your Divine Guide will show you how to make the best of every day and every circumstance. *Then you will know the grand secret that changes life from a tiresome routine into a thrilling Adventure!*

I PRAISE OBSTACLES

Beholding strife-torn men bemoaning Fate,
Their golden would a slave to leaden must,
Hemmed in by Time's " too soon, too late,"
Cut down by Death, reduced to pallid dust,
I mark the chronicle of burdens borne,
The frustrate hopes, the hardships we endure,
Our strength decreased, by sudden sickness shorn,
By change, deceit, and lies made insecure.
And yet I say, Ye obstacles be blessed;
Through you we gather strength, through you we grow;
And when we find ourselves most sorely pressed,
The glory hid within the heart will glow.
As pressure forms a diamond from a coal,
So may the blows of Fortune make us whole.

— Francis Merchant

UNHOPED-FOR BENISON

Yes, my heart, the wind is chill,
The night is dark and long,
But, beyond the steepest hill,
You will hear the song
Of glory, and visible at last
An unimagined wonder,
And, when all suffering is past,
The small voice in the thunder,
That bids the doubting heart believe,
The faltering feet go on
For one more moment, to achieve
Unhoped-for benison.

— Alice M. Swaim

FOR SUMMER

In vain I try to halt the fleeting steps
Of subtle summer walking straight and true.
In vain I try; I am not swift enough,
And she is gone with but a 'passing through.'

In vain I call as though to bring her back;
I view her from afar--she does not stay,
And I am left behind remembering
A glimpse of beauty as she passed my way.

— Carla Patsuris

Fruit Blossoms

A bough of peach,
Of apple, or of pear,
Heavy with bloom,
Will relieve the heart
And brighten up a room.

Nothing is more beautiful
Than beauty you may share—
A bough of white pear,
A bit of God's own orchard,
On the table beside the maple chair.

— Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.

PRAYER

Henry E. Scofield

"Prayer that craves a particular commodity...anything less than all good...is vicious"..."Prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft"..."As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg." These observations of Ralph Waldo Emerson in the nineteenth century bear repeating in this age for the reason that so little heed has been given to his wisdom.

Man goes blindly on asking God to make him rich at the expense of his brothers, punish his enemies, reward his friends and make all sick people well without any consideration for the possibility that there is a divine intelligence that knows more about what is best for everyone than mere man, the creation of that very same intelligence.

There is no basis for ignorance in the matter of prayer in this enlightened age. The libraries are a source of information on the teachings of spiritual leaders of all countries and all past ages. With the history of man's slow unfoldment over the last ten thousand years staring him in the face he should not expect too much enlightenment in one lifetime. The error we make in praying to God is asking him to alter his plan to suit our convenience. We would do well to spend a little more time and effort trying to understand his plan rather than begging him to change it every time it seems to vary from our conception of what it should be.

Contemporary reading reveals a tendency of many thinkers to pay more attention to their direct relationship to God and to veer away from the teachings of other men. Two significant themes show up in so many articles devoted to spiritual matters. One is the Greek admonition "Man, know Thyself" and the other is "Look Within." These signs are stern warnings that the time is here and now for man to lean less on the teachings of others and begin to get acquainted with that intuitional power within every man to obtain his own enlightenment. *"Go into your closet and close the door"* means to shut out your selfish desires and listen to your intuition. It may not tell you what you

want to hear but it will tell you what is best for you. This is genuine prayer.

If you would talk to God confine your end of the conversation to giving thanks for what he has already done for you. If you must ask for something, ask for understanding.

We stand on the threshold of an era of enlightenment prophesied from the beginning of history. Evidence of this is pouring in from the great thinking fraternity of liberal writers both in the field of metaphysics and science. The books are too numerous to mention, but these are but straws in the wind. The fact that more and more people are flocking to the churches in hope of finding what they should be seeking in their own hearts, and will eventually find through proper supplication for understanding, the only legitimate prayer, except for the prayer of thanks for our many blessings, is the fact that proves the approximation of the new era so long prophesied. This generation may be the one Jesus referred to when he said: "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." *(Luke 21:31)*.

Omar's "two and seventy jarring sects" have had their day and the time for their style of teaching is rapidly drawing to a close in favor of a "closer walk with Thee." When you pray, pray for a better understanding of this and you may hasten the day Jesus promised us.

Man would cease his vain wailing if he could but see clearly how his every experience brings him closer to the realization of his dream. When he understands Einstein's 'fourth dimension' —time— he will begin to see more clearly the purpose of misfortune as well as fortune. We need only the ability to read the cipher of destiny to understand the necessity of suffering for the good of our unfoldment.

Civilization is coming of age and our concept of prayer should keep abreast of progress in all other matters. As we strain our intellect to conceive the atom we must try to discipline our thinking of God in more realistic terms. Dean Samuel Miller of the Harvard Divinity School put it this way: "It is only by dint of the severest intellectual discipline that a man may provide a vision of reality for such an age as this." Men of this

stature do not write books telling us that prayer is the answer to all of the problems which we should be solving with the miraculous equipment God gave us for this purpose on the day we were born.

So, let us pray every day, but let us pray intelligently, let us not beg, but give thanks. Let our earnest prayer be for 'a closer walk with Thee'. We may not live any longer but we will live a more harmonious life, knowing God is within our very soul if he is anywhere. And believe me, my brother, he is everywhere at all times. But let's be serious and face the fact that he operates by his own natural laws and not by human whim.

I believe we can all admit that "God is subtle, yes, but not capricious." No sincere prayer was ever a waste of time for two reasons. One, even the lowliest form of prayer brings man just a little closer to God; and, two—sooner or later the uselessness of petitioning God to change his plan will become evident and that person will have learned how to pray. I would be loath to prescribe any form for common prayer but a mighty fine example of the type to which I would subscribe is one written by John Greenleaf Whittier:—

P R A Y E R

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways!
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

(Condensed from April 1960 NEW OUTLOOK, Los Angeles, Calif.)

VEDANTA REQUIRES a common coolie to look upon his humble labor as just as important and sacred as that of a Christ or Krishna. When we move one leg of a chair, do we not move the whole chair? So when we raise or elevate one soul, we raise and ennoble the whole world through him or her; so rigid is the solidarity of man.

— Swami Rama Tirtha

NO MAN IS A STRANGER

History tells us that every few thousand years, more or less, there is a great processing of souls...and to every man "there openeth a high way and a low" and to every nation "there openeth a high way and a low." Men of God must prove if they are with Him or against Him. Thus many are called and few are chosen. On the shoulders of these few rests a future, sacred or profane.

For centuries life has been pregnant with a new era—a dream of a world where no man is a stranger. Through the centuries this dream has suffered with travail and labor awaiting the appointed time to open its heart and deliver the new age. In olden times great prophets arose to remind the people that God's plan will be revealed. The prophets, saints and apostles—they came on a special ordained errand for the Lord. People listened and were led. The plan unfolded slowly, gradually, always a little higher, a little more evolved. Today our cry might well be:

OH LORD GIVE US GREAT MEN WITH LARGE HEARTS. MAKE STRONG THESE CHOSEN FEW. THESE SHALL BE OUR PROPHETS, SAINTS AND APOSTLES. LET THEM REMIND US AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT THE SOULS OF MEN ARE ONE.

In a great book we read...the best preacher is the heart, the best teacher is time, the best book is the world, the best friend is God. Some of us are weary of the way brotherhood is bought, sold, bartered and mutilated by the glib tongue and the slippery attitudes. Little wonder. Each group has a remedy, each nation a method, each political factor its own terms, each law its own convictions, and each man his own prejudice. *We hold faith with the loyal few who stand in holy obedience to a great cause and a great world need.*

Said Confucius: "I shall not be grieved if other men do not know me, but much grieved if I do not know other men." In this we are all guilty. Lord, it is not what happens to me, but what happens to others because of me—my inertia, my unawareness, my lack of response, my neglect.

Right now, we are sadly in need of the prophets and saints. Where shall we find them?

— *Sara Robbins*

THE ACQUISITION OF THE HEAVENLY STATE

Bess Foster Smith

SOME PEOPLE seem to be born into a heavenly state of existence and never get thrust out of it by the world and its affairs. Life, for them, runs along smoothly. All their fondest ambitions are fulfilled and they have an abundance of good health and happiness without any apparent effort. They are like "The Upright Man" described in the First Psalm.

Others acquire all they ever are, or hope to be, the hard way. They struggle against circumstances seemingly beyond their control. Finally they are released from pain or sin or despair or long years of poverty and hard labor and we all say they deserve a reward, a freedom from their trials.

As for me, I have to work my way through life much as a boy works his way through college—by study and research—sometimes poor and sometimes rich in blessings. I seem to have to follow the admonition of St. Paul, "Prove all things and hold fast to that which is good."

It is like this. My spirit begins urging me on with a great longing toward some goal it aspires to attain. But my skeptical mind, that is a stickler for proof, challenges with an assumption that my aspirations are purely visionary, impossible and unpractical. Life is just a series of events and happenings and there is nothing one can do about it. To struggle for the unattainable is like a senseless moth batting its wings against the light.

At this stage I become a referee in a bout between proof and intuition, reason and faith, science and revelation. I begin searching through books of wisdom to prove what is that good and acceptable way of life. It is not easy, but after each bout, I am a little stronger and have learned something that has broadened my horizon and prepared me to take on a new and harder problem.

By the way of definition I will explain that I call that part of me "mind" that receives the offerings of the senses and has the ability to classify, file and rationalize some of these impressions into "sense." It is sort of headlight by which I can see a little way ahead and am able to make choices and exercise judgment.

I call that part of me

"spirit" that seems to be my universal connection with the vast stream of life and which flows through me and urges me to follow along with it. It, too, is a guide, but not a headlight. It is within and speaks in a still, small voice. It persists in promises that I can achieve what I want and make my most cherished dreams come true.

But my mind must be convinced. It must have proof before it will cooperate. That is why I find living like driving a spirited team of horses. I must pull on both reins if I would keep my balance.

I find Montaigne who lived several centuries ago, and figured things out for himself like a psychologist, has words that are like lighthouses for restless souls adrift. "Our plans go astray," he says, "because we have no port of Destination. It is no wonder Chance has so much power over us since we live by chance." Or changing his metaphor he says, "A man who does not have a picture of the whole in his head, cannot possibly arrange the pieces."

Or I turn to a modern thinker, Oliver Reiser. Here is the same thread of wisdom: "The meaning of life is not some antecedent--something that we find, it is something that we create... Whether or not one's life has a supreme meaning (or lives by chance) depends on whether we can organize our various minor purposes into one supreme purpose."

So, I see, it is all up to me. There can be a purpose to life if one is willing to make it purposeful. Perhaps I should resolve to guide my frail bark a little truer and try to cooperate with the still small voice.

When I begin to calculate how little I have compared to some others, and yet am expected to give and share it, I have a hard time convincing my mind that it is more blessed to give than to receive. So I go in search of the answer by examining the lives of those who really practiced what they preached.

I commune with great souls, such as Dr. Drummond, who explains the 13th Chapter of II Corinthians in these great words: "You will find, as you look back upon your life that the moments you have really lived are the moments when you have done things for others... When love is in your life, everything you do is eternal." As you read on you see that love requires both giving of things and the giving of self.

I pick up Lowell's *Vision of Sir Launfal* and read, "Who gives himself with his alms feeds three, himself—his hungry neighbor—and me."

Or in Elbert Hubbard's "Little Journeys" I go to the home of Elizabeth Fry. I learn of her great labor of love among the women prisoners at Newgate Prison. Most people were afraid to go near the gratings but she walked among the women and prayed with them. I hear Caiaphas' words ringing down through the ages: *"It is expedient that one should die for the people."* So One did just that, because He could not let man continue in his hard way, and humanity has been greatly blessed thereby. I read in medieval history of Sir Thomas More who could not lie to his soul and from his martyrdom a century-old question of the separation of state and religion was clarified.

Then there was nurse Edith Cavell wno made the supreme sacrifice when she would not betray her country, and there are the thousands of unnamed soldiers who have made the same sacrifice for the sake of freedom. Gandhi gave himself to the cause of India and through his self-sacrifice freed more souls than all the wars of history put together.

We are really bought with a price. Historians say that without such martyrs the history of mankind would have little more to record than the history of animals. Each of these great ones has left in his wake a light that will shine on down through the ages—even unto me.

Emanuel Swedenborg called the dual forces which govern our lives Divine Love and Divine Wisdom. Just as light and heat, both from the sun, govern our physical life, will and intellect, when harmonized and controlled, govern our spiritual life. Will or inspiration is from the inflowing of this divine love, and the ability to know, to reason, is from divine wisdom.

So to achieve the heavenly state, or as the psychologist calls it "an integrated personality," I must develop both my mind and my spirit and humbly present myself for entrance into that great University of which Cardinal Newman spoke when he said, "Where one can, without interruption, find philosophical repose and the conscious enjoyment of large intellectual possessions."

THE WISDOM OF GANDHI—

All the great religions are fundamentally equal. We must have innate respect for other religions as we have for our own. Mind you, not mutual toleration, but equal respect.

For me the different religions are beautiful flowers from the same garden, or they are branches of the same majestic tree. Therefore they are equally true, though being received and interpreted through human instruments equally imperfect.

I consider myself a Hindu, Christian, Moslem, Jew, Buddhist and Confucian.

Hinduism tells every one to worship God according to his own faith, and so it lives at peace with other religions.

There is only one omnipotent and omnipresent God. He is named variously and we remember Him by the name which is most familiar to us.

My religion is a matter solely between my Maker and myself.

God makes no distinction between His worshippers.

THE GREATEST TEMPTATION...

The greatest of the saints have had their temptations. It is easy to fight non-human nature, forests, floods and wild beasts, but it is difficult to fight the passion in our heart, the illusions that we embrace.

The greatest of the temptations we must overcome is to think that our own religion, our own vision of Reality is the only authentic vision, that we alone have received a revelation and we are the chosen people, the children of light, and the rest of the human race live in darkness.

The saints do not believe that God is the exclusive property of any human being or a group of human beings.

— S. Radhakrishnan

THE UNITED HEART

Robert E. Gelfand

ONLY THE HEART knows how to send out a true thought. The Heart of God pulsates, and man's heart echoes this by beating in unison.

How man tries to ignore his own heart. If the people of the world could hear the sound of their heart, all the desires they live by would be transformed and instead of walking the path of selfishness they would walk the Lighted Way. In these days one must be courageous. Courage is a characteristic of a firm heart, a heart that *knows*. Therefore be *courageous!*

These are the thoughts of a heart in prayer. Today one must maintain these in spite of conditions which surround us. In order to restore balance within ourselves, an open heart and a clean mind is necessary. Work has been described as prayer. The rhythm of labor produces the highest unity. The rhythm of the beautiful is the result of the finest quality of work.

Labor, Prayer, Beauty— these three are facets of the great crystal of *Existence*.

Love is an emanation of the heart. So if one thinks in the heart, one releases love into the world. The mind limits and the heart attracts and fuses. True, the mind is useful and can discern the false from the true. Yet, when *real* judgment is required one must use a pure channel, the heart. The pulsating heart is the center of all life. A pure heart is a chalice. In it lives what is known as sacrifice. This true sacrifice is attained by constant living and thinking in the heart. How is it possible to do wrong if one lives this way? Assert your life. Sound out the truth that dwells within your being. *This is prayer. Only the heart knows how to pray.* There are many thinkers who are held in great esteem, yet if one can know them well, one can see that their hearts are not yet awakened. He lives by a safe path who follows his heart. We have been shown down through the past centuries that Love heals and saves. How can we reach God except through the heart and by the means of Love?

Beauty is achieved by the constant use and effective application of skills. These skills are developed by loving Labor. God labors without end, and we are to follow the same pattern. We are to labor for the world, not

ourselves. This is one world and one humanity, therefore we are obliged to work and serve one another. This awakens our hearts so as to create a human community on the earth doing service and fulfilling the plan of God.

All the various aspects of humanity are to integrate and balance one another. This is how we are to move onward toward our Goal. Therefore, let us labor in love and in unison, serving where we stand the plan of God.

Our Goal is infinity, and this requires a courageous heart. Each one of us possesses this in its potential state, and it only awaits our calling it forth into the Light. *We are divine by our essential nature and we cannot hide the fact forever.* Let us claim our inheritance.

NO GREATER LOVE

"GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Sacrifice and suffering, in the noble cause of human well-being, is the price of spiritual attainment.

Wandering away from God, man has become spiritually dead. Only through renunciation can he be resurrected from the dead and ascend into the Fulness of Life. And it is only through losing ourselves in the service of others, that we find ourselves—reborn out of illusion into REALITY, and God alone is Reality—all else is illusion. When we lose ourselves, completely, in the service of others, our own troubles dissolve and pass away, as does the dew in the presence of the rising sun. All of man's troubles are the fruits of egoism—living unto himself alone.

It is in giving that we receive. In giving all, we have all.

— Harry H. Starrett

Book Review

CRUSHED FOR BETTER WINE (72 pp, $2.00) and TODAY (71 pp, $2.00)
By Sara Robbins, 26731 Las Palmas Ave., Capistrano Beach, Calif.

Sara Robbins' TODAY (subtitled *A Primer on the Philosophic Path*) is a book of spiritual exhortations to the moral and courageous life and should be of interest to all our readers. It is divided into 31 short chapters, one for each day in the month, and treats, with words of wisdom and inspiration, all the main themes that must concern a life engaged in realizing itself to the fullest. Her prose throughout (an example of which is presented in this issue of FIP) is sensitive and carefully wrought. TODAY has attracted the attention of many people in recent years and we review it now in the hope that those who have missed it may be induced to seek it out. Miss Robbins' CRUSHED FOR BETTER WINE is a poetic and often moving work, filled with "distillations of experience," as the introductory page states, and enhanced by Blake-like illustrations from the author's own pen. It is written in the form of impressionistic free verse, which seems quite appropriate for the spiritual themes that occupy her. It, too, is a book that can be generously recommended to most readers. As a sample of her poetic style, we quote a portion of the poem from which the title of her book is drawn:

Day and night, light and
shadow,
They pass before me.
Joy and pain,
They come together,
Together they come to put
my soul on trial:
To weaken me
Or to strengthen,
To test my faithfulness,
To search the secret places
of the heart:
Trampling me, crushing me,
Pressing me for better wine.

THE THUNDER OF SILENCE (192 pp, $3.00) and LIVING THE INFINITE WAY (128 pp, $2.50) by Joel S. Goldsmith; Harper Bros.; N. Y.; 1961.

Joel S. Goldsmith has one of the best reputations in the metaphysical or New Thought field of religion and his two latest books, LIVING THE INFINITE WAY and THE THUNDER OF SILENCE, do credit to his reputation. One cannot deny the clarity, conviction and sincerity of his writing

(the result of his undoubted high spiritual endowment) and its comparative freedom from the irritating vagueness and air of unreality that clouds most of the writing in this school of religious thought. It is impossible to be convincing, when writing of spiritual matters, if one has not experienced and *assimilated* spiritual truth at some appreciable level, and it is this lack of assimilated experience that makes so many New Thought books unsatisfactory.

Likewise, it is impossible to conceal one's spiritual experience, if one has had it — and Mr. Goldsmith cannot conceal his. (However, in THE THUNDER OF SILENCE, one is disconcerted to find him telling us that his books are direct revelations of Divine Truth: "—Insofar as I have observed from my study of the spiritual literature of the world, the truth stated in this book has never been fully revealed, although it constitutes the absolute basis for true spiritual living.")

If one is interested in the New Thought school of religion, Mr. Goldsmith's latest two books ought to rank high on his list. To someone who is following the path of prayer and devotion to a chosen ideal, they will have no special attraction. To those still searching for a path, still uncommitted to any, the following remarks are addressed:—

There is no doubt much good work being done in the metaphysical movement today. But to an interested observer it seems improper for us to claim that we are Divine Power, Divine Wisdom, Divine Omnipresence and, in effect, God Himself, until we have *realized* this directly in profound spiritual experience—and who believes that very many people at any given time have been able to reach such a tremendous superconscious experience? "Only one in a thousand seeks Me," says Krishna, speaking as the Lord in the *Bhagavad Gita*. 'and of these only one in a thousand attains Me'. 'Many are called,' says Christ, 'but few are chosen'. Until we *are* chosen, until we realize God directly, it seems best to follow the path of devotion and surrender (which both Christ and Krishna advocated), and to proceed along this path until it brings us to the high state where one might *realistically* declare the characteristic truths of the New Thought movement.

— *P.H.*

NOTICES and COMMENTS

A FRIEND PASSES. We are very saddened to announce the death of one of our earliest and most faithful supporters, and a Fellowship in Prayer Advisor since the beginning, Mrs. A. M. Davison of Flint, Michigan. Mrs. Davison passed away on July 10 at the age of 93. Our association with her has been long and cordial and in her death we feel that we have lost an old and trusted friend, though we never had an opportunity to meet her personally. For a considerable period during the early years of our work it was her consistent generosity and encouragement that made it possible for us to continue, for which we shall always be grateful. Mrs. Davison was a dedicated, spiritual woman and had a long life filled with many worthwhile activities. Those she has left behind have the consolation of knowing it was a life well spent. We extend our deepest sympathy to her daughters.

FIP NEWS. Mr. Peter V.K. Funk, of Lambertville, N. J. and New York City, has recently been elected a Trustee of Fellowship in Prayer. For the past year we have been in close contact with him regarding ways to expand our work, of which he is a strong supporter, and he has rendered valuable assistance in many ways. As Mr. Funk is qualified in every sense to be one of our Trustees, we are very happy that he has joined us on an official basis...One of our New York friends has voluntarily sponsored an attractive box ad, under the Fellowship name, that is currently appearing in the Saturday issue of The New York *Times*. This generous and promising donation has already brought inquiries about our work and we expect that many more will follow. Fellowship in Prayer readers who have a chance to obtain the *Times* in their locality should be gratified to read this ad, whose theme is the necessity of a world united in prayer to save us from impending disaster—*"God alone can help us"*.

PRAYER GROUP. We wish to recommend to our readers the work of a dedicated group called the PRAYER FOUNDATION, 616 No. Third St., Phoenix 4, Arizona. One of the features of their work is an interesting monthly Newsletter containing many

things that should attract people devoted to the practice of prayer and spiritual living. We hope that a number of our readers will write to them personally, for theirs is an undertaking with which we are in full sympathy.

CONTRIBUTORS. This issue presents several writers making their first appearance in the publication: Rev. H. Richard Rasmusson, minister of the all-student University Presbyterian Church in West Lafayette, Indiana; Miss Alice M. Swaim of Dillsburg, Pa.; Mr. Frank Ankenbrand, Jr., of Greenwich, N. J.; Mr. Robert Gelfand of Brooklyn, N. Y.; and Mr. Henry E. Scofield of Los Angeles. We extend a cordial welcome to each of these new friends...Rev. Rasmusson's thoughtful and most helpful article, 'So You Don't Believe in Prayer', on page 6, was originally delivered, in a slightly expanded form, as a sermon last February. Readers may expect to read more of his work in the near future... Miss Swaim and Mr. Ankenbrand are represented by two fine poems, on pages 16 and 17 respectively—'Unhoped-for Benison' and 'Fruit Blossoms', both of which help to make this issue more appealing than it would have been otherwise...Mr. Gelfand's eloquent essay on 'The United Heart', on page 26, is the first of a number of pieces on similar themes which he has promised to send us. In passing, we might note that 'The United Heart' treats a subject—spiritual transformation and the work of human brotherhood in our time—which is reflected in several other articles in this issue, including the editorial. This was a completely spontaneous occurrence that gave us pause for reflection...Mr. Scofield's earnest and vigorously written 'Prayer', on page 18, is a condensed reprint from NEW OUTLOOK, a Los Angeles publication we have previously recommended to our readers. We wish to thank him for sending it to us...It is good to have with us again Miss Sara Robbins of Capistrano Beach, Calif., who has been absent from our pages for several years. Her strongly written 'No Man Is A Stranger' appears on page 21 and marks a significant return to FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER. We were also happy to review in this issue two of her most well-known books...Dr. Earl Douglass' forceful and pointed affirmation on the nature of Love, appearing on the inside back cover, was suggested to us by Dr. W. J. Thompson of Los Angeles, for which we thank him.

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER is published six times a year at the rate of $3.00. Special rates are available for additional copies. Back copies also available. For circulation purposes up to three copies of an issue will be sent to any regular subscriber upon request.

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WHAT LOVE IS

The Bible speaks a great deal about Love. It tells us 'God is Love', meaning that Love is the substance of His being. We are commanded to love God, and our neighbor, and New Testament writers urge us all to love one another.

We need to get straight in our minds what love is. Of course, love is an emotion—but it is not primarily an emotion. *Love primarily is a purpose.* Love means extending goodwill and putting forth affection toward a person or a group of persons. *You can love anyone if you purpose to do so, for real love is a dynamic act, and not just a pleasant feeling!* Remember, the Bible in commanding us to Love is commanding us to *do* something—not merely feel a glad emotion! By our actual deeds we reveal the presence of Love within our hearts."

— Dr. Earl Douglass

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